1: Hoebel E-5 (1933) 1940 NO6 Comanche NO6

WAR AND WAR LEADERSHIP

COUP AND STATUS

Comanche war notions conformed to the general Plains pattern of raiding and coup-counting.[1] The raid might be made by a party of any size, from a single warrior up. The coup was an individual exploit, made in any contact with the enemy, *after* it had been socially recognized both as achieved in fact and as worthy of distinction; a rough equivalent of an official citation after a modern engagement, if such were undiluted by political considerations.

The life of the Comanche male centered around warfare and raiding. The main objectives were the taking of horses, the counting of coup, and the killing of enemies. Motives for horse-taking were two. Horses, as we have seen, were the important form of property accumulation; the man who had a large herd was wealthy; he could afford generosity to his friends and relatives; he harbored visiting guests from other tribes. Horses also gained him prestige for bravery and cleverness; the taking of horses under difficult conditions provided opportunity for exploits of valor. Such exploits made reputation. Horses gained by inheritance, gift, or breeding reflected the first value, but not the second (except as a carry-over). The killing of enemies was similar in that it led to prestige through accumulation of war honors; but it showed a more direct tribal function when vengeance for the death of a tribesman came in question—though tribal interest was not absent from horse-taking; to have your horses stolen was to be out-matched and shamed by the successful thief (an out-triber).

It required more bravery to hit an adversary with a spear or a war club than to pierce him with a bow-driven arrow or a gun-driven bullet. Thus striking an enemy gave ground for an honored coup, while long-distance killing did not. The how of the killing mattered more than the killing itself. A coup was more valued than a scalp, for, "Anybody could scalp a dead man." But the Comanche considered the removal of a scalp under fire as worthy of a coup. How much scalp the Comanche took depended on how hot the circumstances were. He preferred to take the whole scalp, but if he was pressed for time he seized only what he could get. Scalps were used in the Victory Dance and were desirable as fringe decoration for shirts and shields.

In the foregoing, and in the following, the legal analysis is deliberately pushed further than the Comanche would consciously push it. In any

[1] Cf. George Bird Grinnell, *Coup and Scalp Among the Plains Indians* (American Anthropologist, vol. 12, 1910), pp. 296–310.

1: Hoebel E-5 (1933) 1940 NO6 Comanche NO6

128 727 555 primitive legal thinking, the fact and its legal recognition tend to fuse, and either is spoken of as the whole; the modern layman, e.g., still speaks of "my money in the bank" to describe what is neither his money, nor any money, nor in the bank, but a debt the bank owes him. So with this matter of the coup. The exploit is in strictness no coup, but the new material for 727 555 one. If unrecognized, the exploit becomes a matter of individual memory, perhaps of individual grievance. *Only recognition in due "legal" form turns deed into coup.*[2] But as soon as recognized, the recognition aspect fades from thought, and the deed that was its reason and justification *seems* to stand alone. As in all cases where legal rights are accurately tailored to the facts, it is enough to deal with the facts. But that does not mean that the legal phases can be overlooked. The minute they are lacking, or are in dispute, they will become important, and may become crucial.[3] This is the case with an exploit accomplished, unwitnessed, and not believed, or of one claimed by each of two or several as his own.

The stealing of tethered horses from within a hostile camp ranked as a very high honor, but it was not nearly so valued as striking a fallen enemy who lay near his own lines, or drawing blood from an enemy in hand to hand combat.

The Comanche honored two coups struck on the same victim by different persons. This arrangement was an efficient way of providing sufficient coups to meet the cultural demands of the society—an inflation of the currency of war prestige. The first man to reach the body of a fallen enemy struck it with his weapon and uttered the cry, "*ahé*" ("I claim it"), gaining thereby equal honor with the man who had done the killing. But if a bow or gun had been used to bring down the enemy, this second coup-counter received greater honor for his deed than did the slayer himself.

182 727 555 The problem of adjustment of institution to social end is interesting. Superficially, skill at long-distance killing would seem of more immediate social value to a fighting people. But the stress on hand-to-hand valor or dangerously close approach to the enemy is more than shallow glorification of wolf over fox. The deeds honored are in good part the kind of deeds that toughen a warrior to stand when he is needed. Grinnell, on the other hand, sees in it merely a cultural survival of the traditional days when the Cheyenne, for instance, fought perforce with sticks and stones because they had no bows or guns.[4]

[2] Note the ritual formula for the transference of a recognized coup by its owner-performer when the coup is given to a friend as a gift. See p. 29.

[3] Cf. Ritual Evidence, pp. 103–106.

[4] George Bird Grinnell, *The Cheyenne Indians* (New Haven, 1924), vol. 2, p. 36.

1: Hoebel E-5 (1933) 1940 NO6 Comanche NO6

Lowie emphasizes the play aspect of this phase of warfare. "Obviously," he writes of the Crow, "the idea was not primarily to reduce a hostile force but to execute a 'stunt'; to play a game according to whimsical rules."[5]

In addition to the standardized honors any audacious deed performed against the enemy could be claimed as a coup by a Shoshone or Comanche.

WAR INITIATIVE

The prosecution of warfare was very much a matter of individual discretion. Any Comanche was theoretically eligible to lead a war party. There was no chief or power which could say him nay. Were the individual not, however, a man of proved reputation or the possessor of potent medicine, his raid would remain strictly personal and private. He would simply be unable to muster a following. Nevertheless, no one would object to his going out alone. It was quite a different matter, on the other hand, if a man whose qualities had been attested in combat let his intention to take the war path be known. All fighters who wished to do so came to signify their desire to join his party. Dreams about a successful raid were not deemed necessary as a sanction for starting a war party, but in most cases such dreams were the effective stimulus.

There were two primary motivations for organizing a war party. The first was an entirely personal matter, depending simply upon desire for action, honors, or horses. Merely to feel the urge was to be at liberty to muster such men as would volunteer to go. On the other hand, a war party instigator might bind himself to avenge the death of a fellow tribesman by enemy hands. A slain man's father carried a heavy weight upon his heart while his dead son remained unavenged. "His conscience is not clear." There was but one thing for him to do. He must seek out the lodge of a brave warrior who had compassion for his suffering and whom people would trust and follow. Carrying his sacred pipe, the father or relative of the dead man offered smoke. The warrior knew what was wanted. If he accepted the pipe, smoking with the emissary, he bound himself in contract to take out a party which would not return until it had taken an enemy scalp. (We were unable to discover a single instance in which the pledge was unfulfilled.)

The warrior made known to the camp that he was going forth. He was to avenge the death of "their" slain friend. He exhorted. He said the young men would join him; he told the people that braves did not care, though it meant death. The Vengeance Dance was held before departure. The dancers were those who were going to join the war party. This sort of war party

[5] R. H. Lowie, *The Crow Indians* (New York, 1937), p. 228.

1: Hoebel E-5 (1933) 1940 NO6 Comanche NO6

701 158 shoot an arrow into anybody's pot of meat, taking whatever piece stuck to the shaft.

Parents warned boys who were constantly recalcitrant that they would become such. Most Crazy Dogs started out as wayward youths.

Such men carried on as Dogs until after the performance of some conspicuous act of bravery. After many years of Crazy Dog activity, their rattles were taken from them by a respectable middle-aged man (tɛ́napa). [555] "They had attained prestige and could leave off their antics." By their war records ex-Crazy Dogs were always men of importance in the tribe.

624 554 It is clear from these facts that the war bonnet and other special insignia served a definite social function in Comanche society; they marked the status of the war chief as distinct from that of the lesser war leader, and the special devotees of the war cult from the common warrior.

OBLIGATIONS OF THE WAR BONNET WEARER

554 726 The Comanche owner of a war bonnet was under obligation never to retreat. This was the primary duty assumed with the status. The bonnet was a symbol of tribal integrity and honor to the Comanche, to be protected at all costs. The mere fact that the wearer could not retreat made him a rallying point for all other fighters when he was hard-pressed, for it was equally disgraceful for the bonnet to fall into the hands of the enemy should the wearer be wounded or killed. The war bonnet wearer, dismounted and hard-pressed, could indeed be rescued by a fellow tribesman who dared to risk dashing in to carry the brave off on his horse. This was the sole escape with honor. In one fierce three-day battle with the Utes, a Comanche war chief was so wounded in the leg that he was having difficulty. Another tɛ́kniwap mounted behind him and held him in his place on the horse while he fought off the enemy. The Utes forced the Comanches back and ever back over a battle-field sixty-five miles long. When, during the action, the wounded war chief died, he was tied to the saddle by his protector to avoid his being captured with his bonnet. During the entire fight his body and its protector were screened by a group of fighting braves.

558 On the other hand, it was the absolute duty of a tɛ́kniwap to help a dismounted comrade. Should he fail to do so, any other war chief who observed his disloyalty could publicly upbraid him with the act and take the war bonnet from him in punishment. The accuser was then free to offer it to some other warrior whom he thought deserved it.[14] But this man was also free to refuse if he feared the obligations attached to it. This was said

[14] Compare also the case cited on page 55, where a claimant to a piece of land (on the reservation) had the judgment go against him because he had one time failed to rescue a comrade.

1: Hoebel E-5 (1933) 1940 NO6 Comanche NO6

to be the way it was done, though no case describing such a situation was collected. 558

A war chief whose nerve failed him in a dangerous position *could* retreat—by giving up his right to wear the bonnet. He could cast it off and flee for his life. But he was a man without status thenceforth, for he could never again regain the bonnet and its rank. Life certainly would have been miserable from that point onward. Men hailed him as "elder sister."[15]

But what a chance this disaster opened for an ambitious brave to gain the war leader's status in one stride! He could dash into the danger spot to pick up the abandoned hat with his spear or bow. Turning his horse, he would bring it back and put it on a pole behind his lines. If the fight still continued when the sun was about to set, he then went to the pole and put on the hat. Thus arrayed he charged the enemy four times and struck an adversary on each foray. If he was successful in this and came through alive, the hat was his with all the privileges, honors, obligations and dangerous duties which went with it. This was the practice in the Those Who Move Often and Antelope bands. The lower rank war bonnet could be picked up by any one who saw it and was willing to assume the obligations adhering thereto. For it, the use of the bow or spear was not necessary, according to Becomes A Middle-Aged Man.[16] 555 726

PEACEMAKING

The waging of war was a matter of individual initiative, but the making of peace was a prerogative only in the hands of the war chiefs. A war leader on a raid could make peace in behalf of his own raiding party on his own authority. Such a peace, however, had no binding effect upon other members of the band and not at all upon the tribe. Band peace was made only upon unanimous consent of the warrior class, i.e., the meeting of the tɛ́kniwapnə. The historical making of peace with the Kiowas has been noted on page 12. All Comanche bands agreed to this with the result that it has remained unbroken since 1790. A permanent peace with the Cheyenne was effected in 1840.[17] 728 624

Relations with other tribes were more in the nature of truces than peace,

[15] According to a generalized observation by Neighbors (*The Comanches*, p. 130): "He is deprived of his office by any misfortune, such as loss of many men in battle, or even a single defeat, or being taken prisoner, but never for any private act unconnected with the welfare of the whole tribe." It is not so much that he was deprived of his office, as that he no longer could gain a following.

[16] The above rules are formulated principles for which no histories in action were obtainable.

[17] The Comanche version of the details of this occasion is lost. Its setting in the Cheyenne picture will be included in the author's forthcoming study of Cheyenne Law-ways.

3: Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
NO6 Comanche NO6

687 than rebuke and admonition. The people in general, however, showed great respect and obedience to their chiefs and headmen.

623 While warfare was still going on, the exactions of the chiefs, head-
● 555 men, and counselors who stood at the top of the scale of society were kept in check by fear of reprisals should some man of lower rank later rise to supremacy. Thus the warriors prevented the tipping of the scales toward undue governmental authority. The end of warfare froze the social system, depriving able young men of all chance of social advancement, since this primary means of achieving status was blocked. As a result, the old men became arrogant in a way that they dared not in earlier times.[8]

624 War chiefs were men who had war records and who had won
701 leadership by personal bravery and exhibitions of courage and skill. Each band seemed to have recognized one individual as the leading war chief. Apparently his elevation to the position was given official recognition by the council of elders. Yet, again, in this matter the council apparently followed public opinion, which in this case would be the wishes of the warriors. The war chief was apt to be a younger man than the civil chief and in times of war might possibly overshadow the leading civil chief.

In the event of the death or decline and withdrawal of a war chief, the warriors in council selected one of their number and installed him as their leader. The discussion and the expressions of opinion usually showed clearly who was the most popular man for the place. There appears to have been no formal balloting; the discussion continued until sentiment had crystalized around one man. In addition to the number-one war chief, each band had a number of war leaders of lesser rank.

701 The prosecution of warfare was very much a matter of individual discretion. Any Comanche was theoretically eligible to lead a war party, and there was no power to restrain him. A warrior who wished to organize a war party made known his intention. If his military reputation had been established in combat, if his "medicine" was powerful, and if he was known to be liberal in the division of the spoils, he seldom had difficulty in securing a large following. Continued successes would lead to his elevation to the chieftainship.

[8] Ralph Linton. "The Distinctive Aspects of Acculturation," *loc. cit.*, 506.

22: Dacus Q-3 (no date) 1960 NO6 Comanche NO6
(ca. 1870)

[ca. 1870]

The husband may repudiate his wife or wives at any time, and take back his presents. The wife too, for some causes, may rebel against her tyrant lord, and leave off serving him. This course on the part of a Comanche wife, covers the husband with such disgrace that it can only be removed by killing someone—the first person he may happen to meet is made the victim. It nearly always happens that he first meets with his truant wife, or some near friend of hers, first after suffering the great disgrace, and, of course, he proceeds to slay her, or the vicarious relative.

IF THE COMANCHE can be said to live under any government, it may be set down as a radical democracy. The war chiefs are elected, on occasions of war, by the council of warriors. Their authority is only countenanced and their commands obeyed while hostilities continue. In peace, their authority is merely that derived from their wealth and prowess. The Comanches honor courage and skill in war, and the successful warrior is generally made a chief of some band. There is no unity in the tribe. Besides the seven sub-tribes into which they are divided, each of the seven is made up of small parties, each of which has a leader. In many respects the autonomy of the Comanche tribe differs from any other North American Indians. In most respects, the tribal government is very much the same as found among Xicarillo, Mescaleros, and other wandering Apaches, to which family it is claimed they are nearly related. But in two or three important particulars their method or system of government is entirely distinct from and wholly unlike that of any other people.

When a chief or prominent warrior wishes to organize a warlike expedition, he takes his yellow shield, puts on his eagle plumes, smears war-paint over his face, and assuming the weapons borne by warriors, he rides at a furious pace among the lodges, chanting his war-song as he goes. Any warrior who has taken two scalps may thus organize a marauding expedition, and no authority of chiefs or councils can prevent it. If there are warriors willing to join him they immediately mount their ponies, armed and equipped, and follow the warrior, who first declared war. Their chant is united with his, and thus a war party is made up. But it is not often that the entire band declares for war. The promoter of the war may be a simple warrior, without any authority whatever. For that particular expedition he may be chosen chief, or they may select another to lead them. When going against an enemy the commands of the chiefs are generally obeyed with alacrity. In peaceful seasons they have virtually no chief, or rather every venerable warrior among them is a chief, whose

23: Cabello y Robles G-3 (1778-1786) 1961
NO6 Comanche NO6
Eastern Comanche

[ca. 1786]

customarily situated across the river that some call the *Colorado* (Red) and others the *Rio de la Empalizada* which flows to Natchitoches in order to empty into the Mississippi; from their settlements [on the Red River] they move about to the headwaters of the Brazos de Dios, which are one hundred leagues apart from one another; in this interval they are accustomed to make their residence at a place they call the *Gran Salina* [Large Salt]. There they provide themselves with this commodity in order to barter with the *Taboayazes* [*Taovayas*] and *Guachitas* [*Wichitas*] who, because they lack salt, esteem it very much.

FIFTH: What Are the Names of the Captains That Govern Them?

The names of the captains that I have been able to acquire notice of are in the First Class, El Cota de Maya, or Camisa de Fierro[1]; the second, Cabeza Rapada. Those of the Second Class are El Lobito, El Sorrillo, Guiracaraco, El Guaguanguas, La Boca Partida, El Español, El Surdo, and El Manco. I have not been able to inquire the names of the other three or four who are of the second class.

SIXTH. What Distinguished Those in Authority?

The chiefs with the most authority and following known among the Eastern Comanche Indians are in the first class, el Camisa de Fierro, or Cota de Maya, and in the second, la Cabeza Rapada, there being ten or twelve that are between those of the second class and subject to the two aforesaid [first class chiefs].

SEVENTH: How Did They Gain Their Authority, by Election or by Inheritance?

The command and superiority established by the two

1. For further details about Cota de Maya (Coat of Mail), also called Ecueracapa (Leather Cape), whose Comanche name was Contatanacapara, see Alfred B. Thomas, *Forgotten Frontiers* (Norman, 1932), 295-325.

23: Cabello y Robles G-3 (1778-1786) 1961
N06 Comanche N06
Eastern Comanche

[ca. 1786]

aforesaid chiefs has been by election and vote of all the Eastern Nation; [the two chiefs] having [already] made themselves very distinguished in the encounters of war with their enemies, by which they gained the esteem of all their Nation and the following which they have; in the councils that they hold, always their vote decides, and the rest of the Nation does not oppose them.

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EIGHTH: What Is the Personal Character of These Chiefs and the Influence That They Have, and Are Able to Have in the Negotiations of the Nation?

175 157 648

As the two great captains previously mentioned have not come to this presidio of San Antonio de Béxar, the governor has not been able to learn their character, but if the experiences of the six lesser captains that have come to the ratification of the peace treaties [are a basis for judging], they are of a generous spirit and have manifested more friendliness to the Spaniards than the captains of the other friendly Nations of the North. It has been observed that the retinue of the chiefs [of the Nations of the North] look at the [Comanche] chiefs with more respect and give them more subordination than they do their own chiefs.

[728] 175 648

With respect to the rest of the observations that the governor has made of this nation, he has come to understand that it is necessary to treat them with much friendliness and consistency, for they are, in short, of a very sensitive nature and do not accommodate themselves to any harshness. Without compromising the dignity of his office, it is indispensible [that the governor] manifest toward them all love, and make them believe in the governor, for them to behave satisfactorily toward [the Spaniards]; for if they begin to lack confidence, they take many precautions and manifest their vexation; in virtue of which it is necessary that a governor of the Province of Texas, whom they call Father, have the gravest finesse and precautions in dealing with the said Indians, in order to keep them always

175 648 181 175 648

29: Hoebel E-4,5 (1933) 1969 N06 Comanche N06

622 in commenting on the band headmen, or peace chiefs, remarked, "I hardly [642] known how to tell about them; they never had much to do except to hold the band together." The headman was a magnet at the core of the band, but his influence was so subtle that it almost defies explicit description. He worked through precept, advice, and good humor, expressing his wisdom through well-chosen words and persuasive common sense. He was not elected to office or even chosen. "He just got that way." His role and status were only slightly more institutionalized than were those of the Eskimo headman. In the making of any important decisions of group policy all men were free to have their say. Yet among them all, the wiser old head, whose time-tested judgment the people respected, was the leader. In matters of daily routine, such as camp moving, he merely made the decisions himself, announcing them through a camp crier. Anyone who did not like his decision simply ignored it. If in time a good many people ignored his announcements and preferred to stay behind with some other man of influence, or perhaps to move in another direction with that man, the chief had then lost his following. He was no longer chief, and another had quietly superseded him.

624 War chiefs were outstanding fighters whose accumulated records of honored deeds were tangible evidence of their prestige status. Any Comanche 555 was free to initiate a raid or organize a war party—if he could muster a 701 band of followers. The Comanches were chronically at war with the Ute, 721 Pawnee, Apache, Osage, Tonkaway, and sundry other tribes. In later days, the whites of Texas and the Mexicans on both sides of the Rio Grande were fair game. War, for the Comanches, was certainly a national pastime, if not the conscious practice of a national political policy. We suspect it was both. But so far as it was a national policy, it was not explicitly directed [555] by a governing military or political body. It was a matter of individual motivation, prepared by training since infancy and spurred by a social system that gave rich psychological rewards to the men who were bravest in the face of the enemy or most successful in running off the horses of hostile tribes or the horses and cattle of Texas ranchers.

701 On the raid the leader of the war party—the man who had organized it—had temporary dictatorial powers such as a peace chief never enjoyed. 624 He determined the objectives of the raid; he appointed scouts, cooks and water carriers; he set the camping places and the route of march; he divided the booty, if booty there was. In all his directives he was implicitly obeyed. If anyone seriously objected, he was free to leave the party and go his own way. Success on the raid demanded tough leadership, and the followers of a war chief submitted to it. Yet so strong was the Comanche sense of individual freedom that at any point a man could pick up his arrows and go home.

624 In view of their basic values of individual supremacy and the related

29: Hoebel E-4,5 (1933) 1969 NO6 Comanche NO6

Comanche society in the nineteenth century was constantly recouping its losses by incorporating captives into the tribe. Such captives were taken as children and mildly exploited as houseworkers, if they were girls, or put to work as herders, if boys. The girls were ultimately married by their captors and so acquired full citizenship. The boys were allowed to join war parties and they, too, were incorporated after a time into the kinship system through adoption as "brothers" or "sons" by their captors or some other Comanche friend. Some captives, however, although they achieved free status in manhood, were not absorbed into a family by adoption. Conversely, attrition so decimated a number of Comanche families that only one or two males were left as survivors. These men and unadopted captives had no brothers upon whom to call when hard put to prosecute a wrong. In such a plight there could be no justice for them if left to their own resources. Aggressors would have a free hand.

At this point the Comanches met the social need for a check on aggression and the provision of redress by means of a simple utilization of the materials at hand. They held no constitutional convention to devise new instruments of government. Personal power was the recognized basis of social relations between men. Power out of control was the threat. Controlled power was the countercheck naturally hit upon. The weak-kneed victim of aggression who had no kin to back him turned to some great warriors to press his cause for him "A brave, well-known warrior," runs the stock phrase.

The brave, well-known warrior simply took over the case on behalf of the injured party and prosecuted it as his own. It gave him a neat chance to face down an upstart warrior, to serve his own ends of self-glorification while acting in the interest of the general social welfare—not against it. He could add to the luster of his status while upholding the law of marriage, instead of flouting it. Vanity and social altruism were wedded in one act and both were exploited for the social good. Their gratification was the sole reward, for the warrior champion received no compensation nor any share of the damages collected.

The intervening warrior was acting as a legal champion. He made no pretense of judging the case or of mediating. He entered with the aim of *forcing* the defendant to pay damages exactly as the injured party would have forced him, if he could. And if damages could not be squeezed out, he personally assaulted the defendant with all the violence he could muster. The ultimate sanction was his to use, if need be.

Comanche procedure in the wife absconding cases never involved questions of fact, for fact and evidence were cleared in preliminary investigation by the husband. He had no problem; the presence of the wife with her lover was enough. Adultery, however, was usually surreptitious. And this posed problems. To meet them the suspecting husband had recourse

32: Gilles O,X-3 (1902-c.1910) 1974
NO6 Comanche NO6
Oklahoma

Ca-vo-yo, who was one of the first of the old chaps to become an individual to me, was such a friendly, kindly old fellow that it was hard for me to picture him riding into battle, screaming his war cry. But by the agency's record he must have been a successful and respected warrior for approximately twenty years. Had he not been a successful warrior, none would have sought him out to name their man-child and give of his medicine.

I have tried a number of times to write Ca-vo-yo's story as a giver of names, but the trouble always is that scarcely have you begun to write about the giving of a name, when you run into *Pa-haw-cut*, the Comanche name for medicine. And it is hard to tell a white audience about Comanche medicine, because the white man has nothing through which he can identify with the Comanche's feeling about it. I thought at one time of creating a straw man by combining an individual who by faith had a guardian angel with one who believed his destiny was directed by the stars and their positions, and then to this composite individual adding one who believed in luck—one who would not leave his home for the office of a morning without his good luck charm. Then I decided that the faith of even such an individual would still fall far short of a Comanche's faith in his medicine.

When a Comanche warrior was bragging, to an audience gathered around a campfire, of some mighty coup he had brought about, he was not bragging of a personal exploit—he was telling about the strength of his medicine. From the earliest war games he played as a boy, throughout his active adult life, he was constantly training himself to be ever a better warrior. It was his way of life. Also, he sought to perfect himself in the making of arms, both for war and for the hunt. Each warrior furnished his own arms. We have a written history, more or less, for the last 175 years of Comanche warfare, which shows that the Comanche possessed neither an armory nor a commissary.

Just as he had one set of arrows for war and another set of arrows he used in the killing of the buffalo, so the Comanche had horses trained for war and horses trained to carry him alongside the buffalo, so he could loose an arrow into the rib cage of his huge quarry. But it was his individual *Pa-haw-cut*, or medicine, that allowed him to count coup early and often in the battle—that caused his horse to carry him at full speed into battle and to carry him away in a strategic retreat. The same medicine allowed his horse to place him beside

32: Gilles O,X-3 (1902-c.1910) 1974
NO6 Comanche NO6
Oklahoma

the stampeding buffalo without stepping into a grass-covered badger or prairie-dog hole. 778 492 224

It was his medicine that enabled him to crawl into a cavalry bivouac and sever the eight-foot rope that each soldier had tied to his wrist, so his horse might graze safely during the night, and without waking the sleeper or his comrades lead the horse away. 778 726

It was his medicine that caused his wives to be friendly and congenial, one with the other. It resulted in the wives' caring for his camp, looking after his surplus horses, and bearing mostly boy babies. 778 595 842

For none of these things did he take credit personally. But he was justly proud of his medicine that had brought all these things about, and he guarded it like a jealous lover.

To sum up the attributes of a name-giver: he needed a keen ear and an extensive knowledge of the vocabulary—perhaps a sense of humor helped—and he must have a successful reputation as a warrior-hunter and a willingness to share his medicine. Custom required him to give each individual named a supply of his medicine. Warriors often refused to give a name because it meant parting with a portion of their medicine. They feared the remainder might prove inadequate. Apparently the true name-giver's supply had a similarity to the oil in the cruse and the meal in the barrel of the widow at Zarepath, while she fed the fugitive Elijah. It was replenished as used. 553 778 701 555

My reading indicates that the Comanche placed more emphasis or dependence on the name than did any of the other Plains tribes. A warrior might carry a number of names, should he live a long and successful life. In the event a boy developed into a sickly youngster, or was accident-prone, his parents were apt to seek out one reputed to have even stronger medicine than the one who gave him the first name and ask for another name. Directly after puberty when a youth went alone to fast and pray for a vision, should his vision have particular significance, he would be given a name in keeping with the vision. But no Comanche dared name himself. 171 551 881 787

After his acceptance as a warrior, should he develop outstanding characteristics in methods, strategy, or bravery, he might be given yet another name, descriptive of his accomplishments. For example, there was the Mexican captive Mo-cho-rook, about whom I tell in another chapter. Raised and trained as a Comanche warrior, he was given this name because "he so cruel, he makes Comanche blood run cold." He became a legend while yet he lived. 553 701 551